

GIN CHAMPION™



CAT. NO.
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Radio Shack

TRS-80



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TM

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Gin Champion™

Radio Shack

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Introduction

Have you ever wondered about those people who sit in smoke-filled rooms with rolled-up sleeves and beads of perspiration on their brows, drinking pot after pot of strong, black coffee and playing Gin into the wee hours of the morning? Now you, too, can become part of this fascinating and compulsive obsession, using the TRS-80 Color Computer Gin Champion.

Gin Champion is for beginners who want to practice basic technique or seasoned players who want to brush up on cut-throat tactics and advanced sneaky maneuvers. You can play 16 different versions of gin at ten different skill levels, ranging from innocent novice to hard-core "pro." The Gin Champion will never call a misdeal on you, nor will it suddenly yawn and proclaim that it's "too tired to play another round" when you manage to deal it a lousy hand.

Beware, though you could find yourself shouting wildly at the computer, because the Gin Champion will make you struggle for every point! Don't be discouraged—with a lot of practice, you can become a master of the game!

Required Equipment

To take on the Gin Champion, you'll need this equipment:

- The TRS-80 16K Color Computer
- A pair of TRS-80 Joysticks (optional)

Loading Gin Champion

To load Gin Champion, follow these simple instructions:

1. Make sure your Color Computer is correctly connected to the television and the set is tuned to channel 3 or 4.
2. Insert the Gin Champion Program Pak™ into the slot on the right side of the computer.
3. Turn on the computer, then the television. Adjust the television volume to a comfortable level.
4. If you want to use joysticks, make sure that a joystick is securely inserted into the Left Joystick connection at the rear of the computer.
5. The title of the program will appear briefly, and then you will see the opening options.

Using the Joysticks

If you want to use joysticks while you play, keep in mind these points:





Hold the joystick with the button away from you. Moving the joystick to the right or left will cause the cursor to move in the same direction. Moving the joystick towards or away from yourself will "mark" a card to be moved, or will move the card (you'll see more about this later). Pressing the button on the joystick is the same as pressing **ENTER** on the keyboard. Throughout the manual, we'll tell you to press **ENTER**, but if you're using joysticks, you'll know to press the button instead.

You can activate or cancel use of the joystick by pressing **J** at any time during a game.


Color Choices


There are two color schemes in which you can play. Pressing **C** will change the screen from one color scheme to the other.


Playing Options

At the outset, you have two big decisions to make: the skill level at which you'll play, and the type of Gin you'll play. Notice the top right of the screen. When you load the program, you are automatically placed at Level 1. This is the simplest level at which you can play. To increase the skill level, press the  key until the screen shows the level you want. To decrease the skill level, use the  key in the same way. (**Hint:** you can jump from Level 1 to Level 10 by pressing the  key once, or jump from Level 10 to Level 1 by pressing the  key once.)

Next, choose the type of Gin you'll play. There are four types of Gin which you may choose in any combination:

—Oklahoma Gin. In this version, the "knocking" score is not necessarily ten, but is the same number as the first card turned up at the beginning of the hand (or ten if the first-up card is a King, Queen, or Jack).

—Runs Around the Corner. With this version, your Ace may "run around the corner," meaning you may meld such runs as Q-K-A or K-A-2.

—Laying Off on Gin. Normally, you may not play your unmelded cards on your opponent's cards if the opponent has gone "Gin," but with this option, you can lay off as many cards as possible on a Gin.

(S)—Spades Double. Playing this version, if the first-up card is a spade, all the scores for that hand (including bonus scores) are doubled. Scoring is discussed later.

To choose any or all of these options, press the letter for the option you want. The title of that option will appear on the screen. (If you press the letter again, the title will disappear.) Now, press **(ENTER)**. The letter for your chosen option will change from blue to red to show that it has been chosen.

If you change your mind, you can cancel the option by repeating the above process. For instance, if you chose **O** and then decided not to play Oklahoma Gin after all, you would type **(O)** and press **(ENTER)** to cancel the option. The **O** would change from red back to blue.

To play standard Gin Rummy, do not choose any options. When you have chosen a skill level and type of game, press **(ENTER)**. From now until the end of the **game** (not the **hand**), you cannot change the options already established. Be careful when making your choices!

The Deal

Once your options are chosen, press **ENTER** and the deal will begin. The computer will deal ten cards to itself and you, and turn over a first-up card. If you don't want to watch the entire deal, press **F** immediately after pressing **ENTER**, and the cards will be dealt instantly.

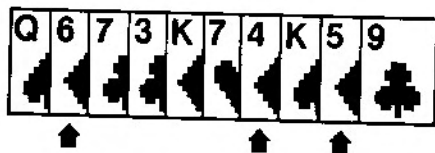
Your hand will be displayed across the bottom of the screen. The computer's hand will be face-down at the top left. The drawing pile and discard pile will be between your hand and the computer's. The right middle section of the screen is reserved for messages.

The computer will choose at random who plays first. After the first hand, the winner becomes the dealer for the next hand. When the deal is completed, a cursor (**▲**) will appear under one of your cards.

Arranging Your Cards

Most good Gin players will arrange their cards to place melds or near-melds together. You can do this using the keyboard or joystick. We'll explain how to move cards by using an example:

Suppose that you have a three-card run consisting of the 4, 5, and 6 of Diamonds, but they are spread throughout your hand.



To place them together, move the cursor first to the 5 of Diamonds. To move the cursor, press the or key (or move the joystick to the right or left). When the cursor is positioned beneath the first card you want to move, press the key (or move the joystick away from you). A blue will appear beneath the card.

Next, move the cursor to the second card you want to move—in this case, the 4 of Diamonds—and mark it in the same way.

Now you're ready to move the two marked cards. In our example, you would do this by positioning the cursor directly beneath the 6 of Diamonds. Press (or move the joystick toward yourself). The cards you marked will appear to the right of the 6 of Diamonds.

Whenever you move more than one card at a time, the cards will be arranged from left to right in the order in which you marked them. For instance, if you had marked the 4 of Diamonds and then the 5, the order of the cards would be 6, 4, 5. You can move one card at a time if you like. When you have arranged your cards for the first time in the hand, press to start playing.

During the play, you can only arrange cards when it is your turn. If you've marked cards for rearrangement and then change your mind, pressing **ENTER** will clear the screen of any marks.

Playing the Game

The player who did not deal has first chance at taking the first-up card. If this player refuses the card, the dealer gets the chance to take it. If the dealer also refuses the first-up card, the player must decide whether to go ahead and take the card or choose a card from the stack (the pile of face-down cards).

Whenever it is your turn, you will see the cursor beneath either the stack or the up card. Use the **←** and **→** keys (or the joystick) to move the cursor to the stack from which you want to draw. If you get first choice at the up card and you want it, position the cursor beneath it and press **ENTER**. If you want to refuse it, position the cursor beneath the stack and press **ENTER**.

During regular play, position the cursor beneath the card you wish to take, and press **ENTER**. That card will be taken into your hand, and the cursor will appear beneath one of the cards in your hand. At this point, you can arrange your cards, using the same method as you did at the beginning of the hand, or discard. You **must** discard one card each time it is your turn.

To discard, position the cursor beneath the card you want to get rid of, and press **(ENTER)**. That card will be transferred, face up, to the top of the discard pile, and it will be the computer's turn to take your discard or a card from the stack.

Knocking

"Knocking" is the old trick of melding enough of the cards in your hand so that you have less than ten pips remaining unmelded (or the Knock score, if you're playing Oklahoma Gin). If you think you have less pips unmelded than the computer does, press **(K)** instead of Enter when you make your discard.

Several things could happen when you knock. For instance, if you try to knock when rules won't allow it, the message: ILLEGAL KNOCK will appear in the message area of the screen. If this happens, press **(ENTER)** to continue playing.

If your knock is allowed, both your hand and the computer's will be displayed, with all unmelded cards to the right. Press **(ENTER)** to see your score and the computer's score. The score you see is the cumulative score for the entire game, not just this hand. Press **(ENTER)** again to see the cumulative bonus scores. You can see the regular score at any time during a hand by pressing **(S)** or check the bonus score by pressing **(B)**. We'll talk about how a hand is scored later.

If you knock, and the computer has less unmelded pips than you, you've been undercut. The message: UNDERCUT will appear in the message area, with an arrow indicating the winner of the hand. Press **ENTER** to display the cumulative score, and **ENTER** again to display the cumulative bonus score. By the way, the same knocking procedures apply to the computer: it can knock and win the hand, or be undercut, too. You'll find yourself looking forward to undercutting the computer and hoping it will become too anxious for its own good!

Scoring

The Gin Champion keeps two separate scores for each player—the regular score, and the bonus score. Here's how scoring works.

Let's say the player who knocks has a lower total of unmelded pips (dead wood) than the opponent. After the opponent has layed off as many cards as possible, that player scores the difference between his dead wood total and his opponent's. When either player reaches 100 points (or 150 points in Oklahoma Gin), the game is over, and the player with the most points wins.

Bonus scores are kept a bit differently. If a player knocks and is undercut, the player who undercut receives 25 bonus points. In addition, the player who undercut the knocking opponent receives (as part of his regular score) the difference in points between his own dead wood and the opponent's.

A player who goes Gin scores 25 bonus points. If the player goes Gin but doesn't notice (i.e., has Gin in his hand but fails to see it after making the previous discard), he receives no bonus for going Gin when the hand is over—he receives only 25 bonus points for winning, plus 25 bonus points for undercutting the opponent. If both players go Gin and one fails to notice, the other player receives an extra 25 bonus points for the first player's unobservantness, as well as his own 25 point bonus for going Gin.

Each player scores a "box" bonus of 25 points for every hand he has won. This "box" bonus is in addition to any Gin bonus or undercut bonus scored. When you play Oklahoma Gin, the bonus for an undercut is 25 points plus one extra "box." The bonus for going Gin in Oklahoma is 25 points plus two extra "boxes."

When you play Spades Double, the winner of the game receives the difference between his point score and his opponent's, plus 100 bonus points for winning the game.

No matter what type of Gin you play, if one player wins the game before the opponent scores ANY points, the winner's regular and bonus scores are doubled.

At the end of a game, the total points are scored as follows: the loser's total score equals his regular score plus his bonus score. The winner's total score equals his regular score, plus his bonus score, plus 100 bonus points

for winning the game, plus the difference between his regular score and the loser's regular score.

Starting a New Hand and Winning a Game

After you have displayed the bonus scores at the end of a hand, press **ENTER** to start a new hand. If neither player has won the game, you may now change the skill level for the next hand (but not the options previously selected). When the desired skill is displayed, press **ENTER**, and the next hand will be dealt.

When a player wins the game by reaching 100 points (or 150 in Oklahoma Gin), I WIN or YOU WIN will appear in the message area of the screen. Press **ENTER** to display the total game scores for each player, and **ENTER** again to return to the options and skill level screen, from where the next game will start.

Draws

If there are only two cards left in the stack, but neither you nor the computer have knocked or gone Gin, the message area of the screen will display: DRAWN HAND. Press **ENTER** and choose a new skill level if you like. Press **ENTER** once more, and a new hand will be dealt. Neither player scores any points for a draw.

Stopping the Game

You sometimes might have to (horror of horrors) stop playing in the middle of a hand or game. To stop a game, press **BREAK**. This cancels all scores and shuffles the cards for a new game. You can either choose new options and start a new game, or turn the computer off. Using the **BREAK** key is especially fun if the computer seems to be running away with the game!

Appendix A—Standard Rules of Gin Rummy

Since Gin is such a popular game, the Gin Champion can play several versions of it. This appendix will help you become more familiar with some standard rules and variations of Gin, so that you'll always know what the Gin Champion is up to. However, if you have never played Gin, you might want to read a detailed description of the game—this appendix does not replace a good teacher.

Standard Gin

Each player is dealt ten cards face down from a standard 52-card deck. The next card is turned face-up, and is called the up card. The player who did not deal has the option of taking the up card and discarding one of his cards, or refusing the card. If refused, the dealer has the next choice of taking or refusing the up card. If both players refuse the up card, the player who did not deal takes the top card from the unseen deck (called the stack), and discards one card from his hand.

Once the first card has been played, the two players take turns in picking up either the up card or the down card and discarding a card from their hands onto the face-up stack. Each discarded card becomes the new up card.

Play continues in this way until a player has melded enough cards in his hand to leave him with a "dead wood" count (unmelded cards) of ten or less.

A "meld" is three or more cards of the same denomination (as in three Aces, three 4's, four Kings) or three or more consecutive cards (called "runs") in the same suit (as in the Ace, 2, and 3 of Hearts, or the 7, 8, 9, and 10 of Clubs).

When a player has dead wood of ten or less, he may "knock" when he plays his discard. To knock, he simply shows his melds and dead wood so that the opponent can count up its value. Once a player has shown his melds, an opponent may show his own melds and then "lay off" any of his dead wood cards that will add to one of the melds already on the table. In this way, it is sometimes possible to reduce your dead wood total to zero by laying off all of your dead wood on your opponent's melds.

When the dead wood has been played and all melds have been put on the table, scoring begins. Each player is penalized by the number of points remaining in his hand after he has put down all melds and laid off as much dead wood as possible. Points conceded for each dead wood card are:

Cards	Points
King	10
Queen	10
Jack	10
10	10
9	9
8	8

King	10
Queen	10
Jack	10
10	10
9	9
8	8

Cards	Points
7	7
6	6
5	5
4	4
3	3
2	2
Ace	1

7	7
6	6
5	5
4	4
3	3
2	2
Ace	1

Note: When playing "Runs Around the Corner," a dead wood Ace counts 15 points against you.

Oklahoma Gin

The same rules apply in Oklahoma Gin as do in standard Gin, with the exception of the number of points in your dead wood when you Knock. The “knocking score” is not always ten, but is the point value of the first-up card at the beginning of the hand.

For example, if the first-up card is a King, Queen, Jack, or 10, you must have ten or less points unmelded to Knock. However, if the first-up card is a six, you cannot knock until you have six or less dead wood points in your hand. If the first-up card is an Ace, you may not knock **with any** dead wood in your hand—in other words, you must go Gin to win the hand.

Runs Around the Corner

In standard Gin, you may not meld a run including both an Ace and a King. However, in this version of Gin, you may meld a run such as the Ace, King, and Queen of Clubs, or the King, Ace, 2, and 3 of Spades.

If you have an Ace in your dead wood at the end of a hand in this version, you are penalized 15 points instead of just one point.

Spades Double

When the cards are dealt, if the first-up card is a spade, all scores for the hand are doubled. This can sometimes help a player take the lead after coming from a long way behind, or even win the game in just one hand.

Laying Off on Gin

Some players do not allow dead wood to be layed off if someone goes Gin. However, in this version, you may lay off any dead wood on a Gin hand as well as a "knocked" hand.

Appendix B—Glossary of Terms

As a convenience to beginning Gin players, we have included this glossary containing terms used throughout the manual which might be unfamiliar.

- Dead Wood** Cards left unmelded in a player's possession at the end of a hand. Dead wood may be played on an opponent's melds unless the opponent has gone Gin.
- Draw** The situation existing when no player can knock or go Gin, and the stack of face-down cards is depleted. No points are awarded any player in a draw.
- Gin** Holding all cards in a hand, with no dead wood left.
- Knock** To show a hand before going Gin, in hopes that no other player has less dead wood in his hand. In standard Gin, a player may knock only when his hand contains ten or less unmelded points.
- Lay Off** To play any dead wood on another player's melded cards at the end of a hand. Reduces the number of points the player who lays off will be penalized when the hand is scored.

Meld

Three or more cards of the same suit with consecutive numbering (e.g., 3, 4, and 5 of Hearts), or three or more cards of the same value (e.g., King of Hearts, King of Diamonds, and King of Clubs).

Pip

A point of scoring on a card. The 8 of Spades has eight pips, and the Queen of Diamonds has ten pips, making them worth eight and ten points, respectively.

Undercut

To have less unmelded points in possession at the end of a hand than the player who knocks.

Up card

The face-up card at the top of one of the drawing stacks. A player may choose this up card or a face-down card from the other drawing stack.

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